And Together, We Are God

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/27023875.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Hannibal (TV), Hannibal Lecter Series - All Media Types
Relationships:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham & Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter
Additional Tags:	Murder and Sex and Cannibalism, That's it, Murder, Sex, Cannibalism, Sassy Will Graham, Established Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Language:	English
Series:	Part 6 of Will Graham and Hannibal Lecter
Stats:	Published: 2020-10-15 Words: 8,465 Chapters: 1/1

And Together, We Are God

by Ooft

Summary

Alone, Hannibal is a hunter. With Will, together, both of them become God.

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Alternately titled (as pitched to my friends): 'Murder and Sex and Cannibalism'

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

“Hannibal, I’m not murdering someone who forgot to thank you when you held the door open for them last week,” Will says, giving Hannibal a sharp glance over his fishing bait.

"She didn't even think to make eye contact," Hannibal sniffs in response.

"Probably didn't want to look at your pretentious mug," Will mutters under his breath and Hannibal suspects he made his voice purposely loud enough that he would pick up on it.

Hannibal decides it’s best to pretend he didn’t hear that last comment. “And what kind of pig would you have us kill?”

“Paedophile,” Will says.

It’s a good choice - fitting for their brand of swine. Paedophilia is incredibly rude, Hannibal believes, and from all of Will’s past suggestions of whom should be hunted next, it’s become apparent he believes it too.

“Would you like me to find them, or would you prefer to do the honours yourself?” Hannibal asks.

“Denise Harsel.” Will is staring at his fishing bait through the magnifying glass as he speaks, but flicks his finger in the direction of a card laying on his desk.

“Cunning boy,” Hannibal smiles as he picks the card up and looks over it, “where do we find Miss Harsel?”

Will is silent for a moment as he snips the string tied to the bait. He sets the scissors down. “At home, grooming kids online. She used to be a teacher. Got fired when she was charged by one of the students, but there were a few more that were too scared to come forward. She ended up with a couple hours of community service.”

“Justice is often lacking in our world, isn’t it?” Hannibal asks, watching as Will stands from his desk.

“How about we have lunch and go *grocery shopping* after,” Will says, smirking as he walks past Hannibal, acknowledging him with a light, lingering brush of their hands, “I’ll grab our stuff.”

As Will disappears through the doorway of the bedroom, Hannibal can’t keep the smile from his face. His eagerness to kill this woman is delicious, so much so that it makes Hannibal want to eat Will before they even begin, but he takes a deep breath and regains his composure, distracting himself with thoughts of what organs they should take from this woman.

Heart is a delicacy that Hannibal has a fondness for, yet to take the woman’s heart seems awfully inappropriate. No, to prey on children, one must have a severely damaged and maimed heart, not a missing one. Thoughts of presentation (different kinds of flowers and plants and whatnot, as well as potential trophies) run through Hannibal’s mind as he wanders

into the kitchen and pulls out ingredients to make a simple salad for lunch; he grabs lettuce, tomato, cucumber, spinach, pear and, to go on the side, the crumbed fingers of a serial rapist he and Will killed last week.

A suspiciously short amount of time passes before Will wanders back into the kitchen, carrying two duffel bags. He plonks himself down at the kitchen bench and offers to help, so Hannibal hands him some lettuce leaves to slice up as he fries the crumbed fingers.

“Eager to get the groceries, dear Will?” Hannibal asks as he watches Will cut the lettuce more roughly than he usually does, his precious, lovely hands shaking against the knife handle.

“I’ve had her bouncing around in my head for the last few days,” Will admits, putting the knife down and taking his glasses off to rub his face. His fingers pull his skin over his bones and muscles in the most delightful way and Hannibal finds himself completely enraptured by the beauty of the man before him, watching in fascination as Will’s eyes roll back into his head with a full-bodied sigh.

Hannibal ignores the pang of jealousy that hits him at Will’s words, instead focusing on the pride that floods through his heart and belly at the thought of Will preparing and researching. Of course he wants to be the only thing that Will ever thinks of, but he can’t be angry when Will is simply doing as Hannibal has always wanted him to do, giving into his nature and joining in with the slaughter, the cleansing of the world.

Alone, Hannibal is a hunter. With Will, together, both of them become God.

“Is your murder suit clean?” Will asks.

“Always,” Hannibal says. “It is hanging in the garage.”

Will nods, jaw clenched, fingers fiddling and tapping on the benchtop. Agitation always comes to him before a hunt and it’s utterly fascinating to watch. It’s as if every neuron in his gorgeous body is alight, making him jittery and unaware of his own movements in a way that captivates Hannibal like nothing else.

Hannibal plates up the salad and fingers for Will, announcing the dish despite Will’s loss of concentration. His eating is hesitant, picking away at each thing individually with his fork, knife lying forgotten beside his plate.

“Fight the adrenaline,” Hannibal says as he places a piece of finger on his tongue, crunching it between his teeth and savouring the way juice leaks from it and fills his mouth, tasting distinctly zesty, “it’s not good for your appetite.”

Will doesn’t respond, shovelling a mouthful of finger in between his lips and chewing.

“I’ll get my suit,” Hannibal says after he has finished eating, standing and washing the plate as he waits for a response.

“Okay,” Will says, pushing his food around on his plate. His callused hands still tremor and his back is set stiff, so Hannibal gives his shoulder a reassuring squeeze as he walks by,

marvelling at the cold skin beneath his fingers, the bitter ice penetrating the fabric of Will's shirt with a seething fury.

Hannibal grabs his suit from the garage and dons it, methodically checking everything over. All of it is perfect, nothing creased or ripped.

And so the hunt begins.

Will tucks the duffel bags away into the trunk of the car and climbs into the passenger seat, staring through the windshield, face set like stone. Every breath he takes is audible, a symphony to Hannibal's sharp ears; every nervous gulp of saliva like the timpani drums being beat, the sharp inhales a chorus of flutes, the heavy exhales dragging like the drawl of a double bass. It's difficult to not slap Will's hands away as he reaches to turn the radio on, drowning out those beautiful noises he makes with music that cannot even hold a candle to his own. Hannibal settles for a sigh that aches his very bones.

After several minutes of careful - albeit distracted - directions from Will, they pull the car up outside Denise Harsel's house.

"I'll ring the doorbell. Tell her I'm a tradesman," Will undoes his seatbelt with fumbling, clumsy fingers, scrabbling around and throwing the belt away from his body as if it has personally offended him.

Hannibal takes note of Will's dilated pupils and shaking limbs. His body has somehow managed to stay stuck in this state of adrenaline, meaning Will is going to be exhausted later. "What would you like me to do?"

"Wait. I'll come and get you when she lets me in." Will opens the door and clambers out.

As he walks up to the front door, Hannibal notices just *how much* he's prepared. Before, Hannibal had been impressed with all the weapons and equipment Will had grabbed, but now he's impressed with Will's ingenuity of wearing tasteless, scrappy clothes to disguise himself as a tradesman and get into the disgusting woman's house.

The outfit works perfectly, as the woman lets Will into her home without a fuss and the door shuts behind them. Hannibal sits in the car, tapping his fingers on the steering wheel in time with the classical music lilting from the radio, wondering what Will has planned for this woman.

Will leaves the house and comes to the car, knocking on the driver's window until Hannibal winds it down.

"Does your murder suit work for baking?" Will asks.

"I'm not sure what exactly you're implying, but I suppose it would," Hannibal says.

Before Will, Hannibal would never enter a murder this unprepared. Now, however, he's more than happy to go along with whatever this man tells him to do, captivated and intrigued by

his wonderful designs, each so unique and different from the last. Hannibal swallows and conquers his pounding heart, listening carefully.

"I'm gonna kill her, but I need you to bake a cake while I do it. I don't care how fancy it is, whatever, but I saw that she has eggs and flour in her kitchen," Will says.

"Why a cake?" Hannibal asks.

"You'll see." Will steps away from the window before Hannibal can ask anything more, walking to the trunk of the car and grabbing out his duffel bags.

Hannibal gives Will a few minutes, then turns off the radio and gets out of the car, strolling up to the front door of the home and letting himself in. It's a tad rude to barge in, but he doesn't want Will to answer the door covered in blood, potentially alerting any neighbours. Hannibal makes sure to wipe his feet on the doormat.

The house is silent as Hannibal wanders through to the kitchen. Will is already standing by the stove, waiting for him, tell-tale splatters of blood on the chest and pants of his clothes.

"Cake stuff's all out for you. Yell out when you're done, okay?" Will pushes away from the stove and strides over to the doorway on the opposite side of the kitchen. "Don't come into the living room."

"Is there a surprise in there?" Hannibal asks.

Will shrugs. "If you make the cake, there will be."

"I look forward to seeing your surprise, then," Hannibal says, clapping his hands and smiling at the sight of all the baking ingredients on the bench in front of him.

Will disappears into the living room and leaves Hannibal to his work.

After putting the base of the cake into the oven, Hannibal hunts around the kitchen for more supplies, finding food dye, cream, jam and cake-decorating kits. A nice icing is easy enough to whip up, a vibrant pink buttercream with stiff peaks. Hannibal finds the kitchen unfortunately lacking piping bags, but he has worked wonders with only a butter knife before - *many* times, in fact.

Hammering comes from within the living room, but Hannibal forces himself to focus on the task Will has assigned him, pinching himself on the arm every time he feels the urge to peek in on Will’s design.

When the cake is out of the oven and cooled off, Hannibal slices it horizontally in half and grabs the cream and jam. The jam is high-quality, a jar of organically grown raspberries from a tea house, the perfect balance of runny and jelly. He spreads it thinly on both pieces of the halves, whips up some cream (vanilla essence in, of course) and slathers that on, sandwiching it between the halves of the cake.

The icing goes on, easy to manipulate even with the use of the butter knife. Hannibal uses the excess cream from before to create a flower in the centre of the top of the cake, crowning the

very middle with a gold decoration piece.

“Will!” Hannibal calls when he’s perfected the cake.

One last round of hammering sounds and stops. Will comes into the kitchen, covered from head to toe in blood, flesh and other unidentifiable gore, his clothes and hair plastered to his skin, some parts soaked and dripping onto the floor. A trail of bloody footprints has followed behind him, creeping from the shadows.

In other words, he looks breath-taking in the worst, best way possible.

“Is there icing for writing?” Will asks, looking through the decorations.

“Here,” Hannibal says, plucking a tube of black icing from the pile, “what would you like me to write?”

“Happy fortieth. Please,” Will says.

Hannibal lines the icing up and writes on the cake, looping each letter and making it as smooth as possible. When he’s finished, he turns to Will, who is grinning merrily, a malicious glint lurking in his eyes as he inspects the cake, looking at it from every angle possible and nodding.

“It’s perfect,” Will says, kissing Hannibal’s cheek and grabbing the cake from the bench. He walks over to the doorway that leads into the living room. “Wait here a minute. I’ll come get you.”

Hannibal nods, watching as Will steps into the shadows and disappears. When he comes back, he’s grinning even wider than before, hand held out for Hannibal to take. They melt into the shadows and go to the living room.

There has not been a single design of Will’s that has failed to take Hannibal’s breath away. The one before him is no exception.

In the centre of the room, Denise Harsel sits on the sofa, Hannibal’s cake sitting on the coffee table in front of her. It seems that Will had the same thoughts as Hannibal in regards to representation; a cavity sits in her chest, exposing her heart through it, the whole thing ripped and torn, chunks of it hanging out of the hole and peppering her shoulders. A large, gaping void in her abdomen reveals her missing organs. It would be nice to have some spare liver and stomach lying around, Hannibal decides, and he nods along in appreciation as his eyes drink in more of the room, of the artwork that Will has created.

Above the woman, a banner with the word ‘surprise!’ written across it hangs, long strips of flesh that drip with blood nailed to the sides and the roof in a gory replication of coloured streamers. Along the walls, a similar thing has been done, her small intestines lining the roof and dripping blood on the floor below, each swoop framed by more strips of skin. Blood, flesh, nails and teeth pepper the carpet like confetti, each piece surrounded by a small pool of red.

“I’ve set it up so that a tip will be sent to the police on her birthday,” Will says when Hannibal turns to look at him.

“Exquisite.” Hannibal takes one last, sweeping look around. “Your designs are art, dear Will.”

“I learnt from the best,” Will says, taking his hand. “C’mon. Let’s clean up and go home.”

In the kitchen, Will opens one of the duffle bags and pulls out a set of clothes that is identical to what he already has on. It’s become fairly standard practice for him to buy two sets of the same clothes, a tactic he devised so that he could enter houses, get as messy as he liked, then change and leave in the same type of clothing, avoiding suspicion from any potential witnesses.

As Will wipes the blood from his skin with a wet cloth, Hannibal unbuttons Will’s shirt, helping him peel the bloody fabric from his skin and fold it neatly into the bag, ready for burning later. Before Will can wipe his lips, Hannibal captures his chin and pulls him in, tasting and sucking the blood from Will’s mouth. Metal and salt mix together in an interesting combination, forcing Hannibal to give into his more instinctive desires, his mouth drifting away from Will’s lips and taking to his jaw instead, biting and sucking along the bone, relishing the way the skin slides beneath his teeth.

Humming, Will tilts his head back and lets Hannibal explore his throat. He isn’t completely lost to Hannibal’s touching, still wiping over his arms and hands with the cloth as Hannibal licks the blood from his neck. The blood is sweeter and fresher, the layers of it thick enough to not have dried yet.

“Let’s go,” Will says, pushing Hannibal’s shoulder and interrupting him.

Hannibal kisses Will quickly and steps away, picking up one of the duffle bags. They leave through the front door together, Hannibal holding it open for Will (who thanks him) and go out to the car, dumping the bags in the trunk and driving away.

As he drives, Hannibal sneaks glances at Will, admiring the little spots of blood still flecked across his neck and hairline, not prominent enough to give him away, but certainly enough to still appear as the beast he is, his eyes dark, brow furrowed and nostrils flared. The blackness of Will’s eyes contracts, adrenaline clearly fading as his limbs stop shaking and his body relaxes into the car seat. Testing the waters, Hannibal rests his hand on Will’s thigh and squeezes, hoping it’ll serve as a gentle reminder of where they are.

Will places a hand over Hannibal’s, curling his fingers around Hannibal’s palm and holding it, his thumb rubbing over Hannibal’s knuckles in a calming, repetitive way. Out the corner of Hannibal’s eye, he can see Will looking out the window, taking in the streets around them and watching the people wandering, everything in contrast to his blank staring through the windshield from before. It’s a shame to watch the beast retreat, but Hannibal admires the way Will has come to collaborate with it, allowing it to surface for the hunt and use all his energy, then spend a few days as himself again, building it all back up and repeating the cycle.

Hannibal wonders what he would be left with if his own beast retreated.

It would be a miserable existence, if his childhood was anything to go by. His art wouldn't have the same beauty it has now and each kill would appear bland and boring, too similar in their nature. The beast allows for more creative liberties, even the occasional impulsive decision to change something in the presentation, or perhaps take more trophies than what is needed.

The beast is hungry, after all. Always hungry.

They arrive home, Will grabbing their things from the trunk and marching up to the door, Hannibal following close behind, keys in hand.

"Excuse me, darling," Hannibal says as he places a hand on Will's hip and reaches around him, unlocking the front door and pushing it open as best he can.

Will opens the door with his foot (Hannibal feels he really must ask him to stop doing that, as it leaves prints on the wood) and steps through, heading straight for the living room and stoking a fire. Hannibal watches as Will pokes at the flames, blowing on them as if breathing life into them, raising them from the ashes of past fires.

Slow and precise, offering Will time to turn around or move away, Hannibal walks forward, pulling Will back against his chest as they stand in front of the fire together, Hannibal watching with his chin perched on Will's shoulder, their heads pressed from the side. Will's hands come to rest on Hannibal's wrists, holding them in loose fingers, his stomach falling and rising beneath Hannibal's palms. Each breath Will takes for himself, it seems as though he gives a little to Hannibal, allowing him to see the very essence of his being, an unseen force drifting through the air and holding them together, two bodies existing in one great, terrible beast. Hannibal hopes that each breath he takes passes to Will as well, gives him the same feeling that Will's breathing gives him.

"I need to get out of these clothes," Will says after a few minutes, letting go of Hannibal's wrists and beginning to unbutton his shirt.

Pressing a chaste kiss to Will's neck, Hannibal steps away and undoes his plastic suit, pulling the zipper down and extracting his limbs from it. He folds it up and places it on the coffee table, turning his attention back to Will.

"Would you like my assistance?" Hannibal asks as he walks over to Will.

Will grunts in assent, holding his arms out for Hannibal to grab his shirt and pull it away from him. "Thanks," Will mumbles as he fiddles with the fly of his pants, undoing them and dropping them to the floor. He tosses them into the fire, watching with a blank expression as the clothes catch fire and smoulder in the flames, popping quietly, some of the chemicals in the fabric turning the flames momentarily blue and green.

Hannibal hands him the other set of clothes, frowning at the sheer amount of blood soaking them through. Given what Will had done to the woman's body, it's not surprising how much blood is trapped in them, but Hannibal finds himself glad they burn the clothes, as washing them would be near impossible. The meaty, metallic smell of the blood drifts from the fireplace in a lovely miasma while everything burns away.

“I’m gonna have a shower,” Will says when the clothes are fully destroyed, becoming nothing but ashes in the fireplace, “you are most cordially invited,” he adds with a smile as he brushes past Hannibal and leaves the living room.

Hannibal follows Will’s nude form through the home, admiring the muscles of Will’s legs as they climb up the stairs and the offset of Will’s shoulders as they sway with each stride. His pale skin is stained red, dried blood cracking and flaking away in some places. Hannibal files away a mental note to mop and vacuum the floors later.

When they’re in the bedroom, Will turns to Hannibal and reaches for the buttons of his shirt, undoing them as Hannibal shucks off the suit jacket and hangs it on a coat hanger by the door. Hannibal slips the shirt off as well, chuckling when Will kisses him and disappears into the en suite, where the shower water immediately begins to run. Taking off the last of his clothes and folding them, Hannibal makes his way to the en suite, breathing in the steamy, hot air that comes from the shower and spills into the rest of the room. He flicks on the fan and gets into the shower.

Will turns to face Hannibal, smiling and holding a shower loofah in his hands. The soap on it is already tainted brown and red, a stark contrast to the white plastic. Hannibal takes the loofah from Will and answers his silent question by pressing it to his skin, rubbing it across his chest and admiring the line of pale flesh that is left in its wake. A smile passes Will’s lips as Hannibal cleans off his chest and stomach, ridding him of all the gore and freeing him from the clutches of the beast.

“Tell me about your design,” Hannibal says as Will turns around and offers him a view of his back.

“I’m sure you’ve a few ideas of your own,” Will says.

Hannibal pauses to consider his phrasing. “There’s always a chance I wasn’t correct in every aspect.”

“I planned it all a few days ago,” Will admits. “Sorry I didn’t tell you earlier, I just didn’t want to ruin the surprise for you.”

“There is no need for apologies, dear Will,” Hannibal reassures him, kissing the back of his neck.

“Did you like it?” Will asks.

“How could I not? It was divine. I have hope you will never make a design without me in mind.” Hannibal wraps his arms around Will’s waist, pulling him in and kissing the wet curls at the back of his gorgeous head.

"You're always on my mind," Will says, reaching to cup the back of Hannibal's head, turning slightly to kiss Hannibal with the corner of his lips.

Starvation gnaws at his stomach, begging for him to grab Will and sink his teeth into him, to rip him apart and consume his essence, to eat every part of him he can, because while Will

gives him energy metaphorically, Hannibal wishes for him to do it literally too. Ignoring his thoughts, he kisses Will's hair again, kneading his fingers into Will's belly.

"I must tell you, the thought of ripping her heart out and placing it back crossed my mind during lunch," Hannibal says.

"I just thought that the pursuit of a child meant someone was fairly damaged. And gutless." Will chuckles to himself and shakes his head, leaning back into Hannibal and looking at him through the corner of his eye, kissing his cheek.

"The use of her guts as decorations was a stroke of genius," Hannibal tells him, feeling his pride for this beautiful man swell up in his heart.

Will ducks his head, shy and chuckling still. "I thought you might be upset if I used too much, so I made sure to save some for you. Felt like a sausage kind of week."

"You don't have to spoil your designs for me, darling," Hannibal says. He hopes his stuttering heart against Will's back doesn't give his lie away.

"It's not spoiled if I'm doing it for you," Will says, his voice growing soft, "I like doing things for you. I love you."

"I love you too," Hannibal says.

They stand in that position for a while longer, basking in the hot water and steam of the shower. Hannibal grows bored of their stillness and pulls away from Will, kissing his shoulder as he goes and proceeding to scrub his hair under the water.

“I am a little sorry I didn’t get to see you in action,” Hannibal says.

Will raises an eyebrow. “There’s no need to lie, Hannibal.”

“I’ve never lied to you, Will,” Hannibal smiles when Will laughs incredulously, “I’ve only ever bent the truth, and always with your interests in mind.”

“You brought about the beast,” Will murmurs, sobering, chasing the smile from his lips.

Hannibal allows himself to shrug, only slight enough to convey his meaning. “I don’t believe in captivity; it only promotes cruelty.”

“I know you like it coming out of me, but I think it might be at least a week,” Will says, “it took a bit out of me today.”

“You’re not used to so much planning,” Hannibal reasons.

Will is silent, contemplating and constructing an answer. Hannibal can see that Will agrees with him, understands that the route of his problem is that this kill has been distinctly different from his others, but Hannibal wonders what specifics Will is going to present him with.

Ducking under the water and rinsing the shampoo from his hair, Hannibal waits for Will's answer patiently, watching him from under his eyelashes and observing his tilted head and frowned brows. Hannibal reaches out for Will with a handful of shampoo and scrubs it through his hair, tugging the curls clean through his fingers and admiring the way the foam turns red. Grabbing Will's shoulders, Hannibal guides him beneath the water and tilts his head back, Will following his direction without fuss and trusting Hannibal to rinse the shampoo and blood from his hair.

Red rivulets slide from Will's neck to his spine, slowly creeping and connecting with other droplets, gaining speed and dripping onto the shower floor below, losing colour and swirling into the drain. How many other people wash blood from themselves into the sewerage below, Hannibal doesn't know. He supposes it doesn't matter; none can compare to the terrible beast that is him and Will.

It's when Hannibal is combing conditioner through his own hair that Will decides he has come up with an appropriate reason for his anxiety.

"You're right about the planning," Will begins. "Every time I've picked a target, it's just *happened,* an impulse decision, no other option. This one… I picked her out specifically, studied her, got to know her. I bought stuff to help with the presentation, planned everything perfectly. Had a Plan A, a Plan B, even a C," Will shakes his head and waves his hands in gesture, as though presenting something to Hannibal that only they can see, "I *chose* her. Got myself worked up about it and just fucking- I ripped through her. I saw red. I don't know how to explain it, but I just felt so angry and anxious when I saw her and I didn't even torture her, I just murdered her without a second thought. And it felt good. Not just righteous: good. But now I'm fucking tired and shitty, so I don't even know if it's all worth it."

"It's all practice, darling," Hannibal says, letting the conditioner sit in his hair as he combs some through Will's, teasing the cream between the curls and setting the hair neatly to the sides.

"I know," Will sighs, putting his arms around Hannibal's waist and dragging him in close, dropping his forehead onto Hannibal's shoulder and leaning into his chest, "I don't like being this weak. That's all."

Hannibal slings an arm around Will's chest and upper back, curling his fingers loosely around Will's shoulder blade, though ultimately focusing on combing the conditioner into his scalp, starting from the roots of his hair. "All people experience weakness - it's what makes us strong."

"So you're just furthering my theory that you're not a person?" Will asks, smiling against Hannibal's skin.

"I have moments of weakness," Hannibal says against his better judgement, "I simply ensure mine are difficult for others to recognise."

"I know. I was joking," Will says.

Hannibal hums in consideration and pulls away from Will, setting the comb back onto the shower rack and stepping under the stream of hot shower water, rinsing the conditioner from his hair. He tilts his head back, fully exposing his throat to Will, who admires the sight with his eyes rather than his teeth. Sweeping his arm in gesture, Hannibal allows Will to stand under the water, watching in fascination as Will scrubs the conditioner from his hair, raking his fingernails across his scalp.

“Come,” Hannibal says, turning the water off and climbing out of the shower. Will follows obediently, taking the towel Hannibal hands him and wrapping it around himself.

They dry themselves off, Hannibal finishing first and gently towelling Will’s hair as he dries his legs. It’s peaceful, the silence between them, neither mentioning Will’s shaking hands and twitching fingers as he sits back and closes his eyes, finding peace in the gentle, circular motions of Hannibal’s fingers against his scalp.

“Will,” Hannibal says when he’s done and begins to brush Will’s curls. Will’s eyes open slowly. “Would you like dinner?”

“Please,” Will says, a low, hungry edge to his voice.

“The beast has taken much from you today,” Hannibal says, “but so have you, Will. Your expectations of yourself mean you feel inadequate when you are unable to meet them. That is what has allowed the beast to take so much of your energy.”

“You make it all sound so easy,” Will chuckles wryly.

Hannibal tilts his head in consideration. “It can be, if you allow it.”

“The beast scares me,” Will says.

“It’s the power it has over you that makes you afraid,” Hannibal corrects him, placing the hairbrush onto the bench and using his freed hand to caress Will’s cheek, tilting Will’s head up slightly to meet his eyes. “Cooperate with it, instead of trying to control it.”

“I’ll try.” Will kisses Hannibal softly and pulls away, hanging his towel on the rack and leaving the bathroom.

Hannibal smiles at the sight of Will wiggling into a shirt and shorts, already preparing to hop into bed even this early in the night. Following his example, Hannibal dons a sweater and pants, earning a delighted grin from Will.

"Slob," Will says, kissing Hannibal with his lips still curled into a teasing smile. He slips past and out of the bedroom, down the hall and (presumably) to the living room.

Hannibal waits in the kitchen for Will, who returns with the duffel bag of organs in hand, giving it to Hannibal and helping him stack it all away into the fridge. When they've finished, Will gives Hannibal a companionable hip bump, kissing his shoulder and skipping over to the bench to hop up on a stool.

"Would you like to celebrate today's kill, or wait a few more days?" Hannibal asks.

Will shrugs. "I don't mind."

"I think that given your state of mind, we should have some beef shoulder from last week. How does that sound?" Hannibal watches as Will's face breaks into a grin, then turns into a shy little thing, ducking his head and peering at Hannibal through his lashes. "What is it?"

"Are we cooking it on the spit?" Will asks.

"I was going to ask if you would like to cook it on the spit, yes," Hannibal says.

"I can do that," Will says, smiling. He gets off the stool and walks over to the fridge, taking out the shoulder of a family murderer.

Hannibal watches as Will bustles around the kitchen grabbing rosemary and other herbs, dumping them all into a mortar and going on to crush and grind them together with a pestle, the motion straining his muscles and showing the strength within. Before it can be considered staring, Hannibal turns away from Will and pulls out some vegetables that will be nice to bake, peeling the potatoes and carrots, before chopping everything up and marinating it with olive oil, thyme, garlic and lemon juice - a simple concoction, but tasty. By the time he puts everything onto a tray and into the oven, Will is outside roasting the shoulder, drinking beer as he turns the spit.

When the meat is finished, Will comes inside with it on a tray, setting it carefully on the bench and carving into it deftly, licking at his wrists when some of the juices leak onto his hands. He furrows his eyebrows in concentration as he slices along the bone, trying to carve away as much meat as possible in neat strips, tutting and sticking his tongue out between his teeth when he almost cuts his fingers. Upon finishing, he gives Hannibal a happy, silly grin, watching Hannibal’s movements as he dishes up the meat and vegetables. Hannibal makes sure to serve Will more food than he usually would, though he suspects it won’t be enough and that a second helping will be in order.

They eat dinner in relative silence. As Hannibal predicted, Will *does* excuse himself to go and grab a second helping, coming back with slumped shoulders and a frown tugging at the corner of his lips; he feels guilty, Hannibal notes, not surprised in the least. No matter how many jokes Hannibal makes about Will liking his cooking enough for seconds, Will refuses to accept that his eating habits are perfectly good and that Hannibal finds them more enticing than annoying.

While Will finishes his dinner, Hannibal sips his wine and observes him. Around the edges, his eyes droop, head nodding frequently when he blinks too slowly, his arms and hands tremoring at each clink of his knife and fork against the plate, sometimes shaking his head as if to knock something loose.

“Why don’t you go to bed, mon biquet?" Hannibal suggests when Will finishes eating.

"’Mon biquet’?" Will repeats, smirking.

"'My lamb'," Hannibal explains as he takes Will's plate, kissing his temple. At the sight of Will's raised eyebrow, Hannibal sighs. "Unless you'd prefer ‘mon petit connard’? I will say,

that would be a much more accurate term."

"I'm assuming that's an insult of some form," Will says, laughing.

"'Little asshole', if you would excuse my language." Hannibal smiles when Will falls into a fit of giggles.

"Don't you mean, 'if you'll excuse my French'?" Will manages to wheeze, before bursting into another round of laughter.

Hannibal shakes his head and leaves the room, listening to Will try to compose himself, but failing and falling into more fits of giggles. He cleans the kitchen quickly, only pausing when Will comes past and kisses his shoulder, slinking away up the stairs afterward.

Will is laying in bed and staring at the ceiling when Hannibal comes in. He's quiet and subdued now, not reacting when Hannibal leaves to brush his teeth or even when he comes back, taking off his sweater and pants, folding them and sliding in under the covers beside Will. Once Hannibal places a firm but gentle hand on Will's belly, Will turns to him, expressionless.

"Come here," Hannibal says, opening his arms.

Will shuffles over, laying his head on Hannibal's collarbone and resting an arm across his chest. He closes his eyes when Hannibal holds his back and waist.

"I love you, dear Will," Hannibal leans down to murmur in his ear, kissing the back of his head.

"I love you too, Hannibal," Will mumbles back, settling more heavily onto Hannibal with a sigh. "'Dear Will' is a much better name than 'lamb', I think."

Hannibal chuckles. "I'll make note of that."

"Do you get annoyed that I don't call you anything?" Will asks.

"You are naturally less verbal in your affections, so no," Hannibal says.

"Is that so, mon vieux?" His lips curl into a smile against Hannibal's skin, tone lilting in a teasing manner. He hasn't pronounced it correctly - he most certainly grabbed the term itself directly from the internet without hearing it said - but Hannibal catches his meaning.

"Are you calling me old, or big?" Hannibal asks, eyebrow quirked in amusement, even if Will can't see.

"Whatever you prefer," Will says.

Hannibal acknowledges him with a hum. "Calling me by my name is the greatest gift you give me, dear Will. I wouldn't trade my name for any of the other terms in the world, especially not where you're concerned."

“That’s good,” Will says, “I’ve never really been one for pet names, anyway. Closest I ever got to having one was when my grandma called me ‘sweetpea’ that one time. Never did stick, that name.”

“What did your father call you?” Hannibal asks.

“Will. Or Willy. Wilbur, sometimes, for a joke. He was William, on his birth certificate, but mine was always just Will. That’s why I’m not a Junior or anything. He went by Bill - always hated the name William.” Will chuckles to himself. “One time, he came in for parent-teacher interviews and my teacher got annoyed with me halfway through, called me William when she told me off. Dad didn’t like that. He told her he’d ‘get out my goddamned birth certificate and show her it’ if she ever called me William again. She always called me Will after that.”

“Your father was a sensible man,” Hannibal says.

Will shrugs. “He just thought we got names for a reason. Figured they should be used.”

“Should I only call you Will, then?” Hannibal asks.

"Call me whatever you want," Will says, "as long as it's not 'lamb' or whatever."

"Mon mouton?" Hannibal suggests.

"What does that mean?" His tone sounds like he's suspicious of Hannibal. He has every right to be.

Hannibal bites his cheek and reminds himself to keep his tone even. "My sheep."

Will doesn't dignify that with a response, sighing and settling down to sleep. Smiling to himself, Hannibal lets Will have his peace, occupying himself with the action of rubbing Will's upper back firmly and attempting to sooth any lingering traces of tension that Will still holds.

An hour passes and Will hasn't fallen asleep. He's tired, Hannibal can tell, though he can't bring himself to drift off to unconsciousness. He has opinions on what it could be - tinnitus being the most prominent - but when Will begins fiddling and kneading his fingers into the mattress beside Hannibal, he decides it must be general restlessness plaguing the beautiful creature in his arms.

"What's on your mind, dear Will?" Hannibal asks.

"I'm tired, but I can't sleep," Will grumbles, lifting his head up and planting it back into Hannibal's chest, smacking his forehead down and sighing, "just my fucking luck."

Hannibal pauses to consider phrasing. "Perhaps the change in routine is what is stopping you from falling asleep."

"Oh, that's what we're calling it now?" Will chuckles, sending tremors through Hannibal's chest and shaking his arm.

"I was avoiding using crass terms," Hannibal explains.

Will snorts. "Oh yes, 'heated fucking and breeding like goddamn animals' is a little crass, I will admit."

"For someone so tired, you seem perfectly capable of banter," Hannibal teases.

"I feel like I'm tired enough to fall asleep on a fucking boulder in the middle of goddamn nowhere right now," Will groans.

"And yet you cannot bring yourself to sleep," Hannibal says.

"It's not gonna be the same as usual," Will says, lifting himself up from Hannibal's chest, crawling back to prop his chin on his elbows, “I’m not gonna get all that worked up or rough.”

Hannibal sits, opening his arms to Will, who crawls into him, peering at him through his eyelashes. “I don’t expect you to, darling. All I’ve ever wanted is to take care of you. Allow me the pleasure.”

“Okay,” Will says.

With that, Hannibal reaches over the side of the bed and under it, feeling around for a towel. Usually, they were then for when Will woke up sweating, an easy way to keep the bed dry, though Hannibal supposes they've been useful for other things, over time. Grabbing it, he shakes the creases and folds from it, laying it down on the bed and giving Will space to sit and get comfortable.

Will settles against the headboard of the bed, tugging his shirt off and tossing it away to pile on top of Hannibal’s pyjamas. After a deep breath, he meets Hannibal’s eyes and parts his legs.

Cautious, Hannibal crawls between Will’s legs, placing his arms down on either side of Will’s waist, not tightly enough to bracket him, but enough to get close, to make it so their noses brush. Will’s breath stirs against Hannibal’s lips as neither of them move, eyes darting back and forth, staring and drinking each other in.

It’s Hannibal that closes the distance, leaning in and pressing his lips to Will’s. Sighing into Hannibal’s mouth, Will relaxes, his wandering fingers drifting up and resting against the side of Hannibal’s neck, curling gently against the skin, his calloused fingers pressing down and feeling.

Electricity sparks in the air around them, making Hannibal’s body hair stand on end as though reaching out for the stunning creature before him, trying to touch Will and consume him. He fights the urge to sink his teeth into Will’s swelling bottom lip, reminding himself that this is a night of soft delights, not rough indulgences. Pleasing Will is his utmost priority, coming before all else in the world - all humans seek to please God.

Will is God. Together, they are one great, big beast. *They are God.*

Hannibal pulls away from Will's lips and takes to kissing his face instead, running his fingers along Will's prickly jaw as he pecks his forehead and brow, committing the shapes and angles of Will's face to the memory of his lips with the same clarity he can remember through his eyes. A breathy moan drops from Will's lips when Hannibal kisses his neck, sounding delicious and inviting. Humming, Hannibal presses his hands against Will's chest, smiling at the feeling of warm skin sparking beneath his fingers, the rarest of occurrences when it comes to Will Graham.

Hannibal pulls back and gives Will room to wriggle out of his shorts, leaving himself entirely nude. Smiling, Hannibal follows suit, taking his own briefs off and leaning back between Will’s legs, kissing his knees and thighs, hands brushing along and feeling the hair and skin. Will gasps when Hannibal nears his cock, but otherwise doesn’t move.

“Onto your stomach,” Hannibal encourages him, giving him space.

Will darts forward and presses a kiss to Hannibal’s lips, before collapsing back onto the bed, flat on his chest with his hips arched backward, legs spread and feet tapping against Hannibal’s knees, trying to entice him. Hannibal chuckles at his antics and reaches to the night stand beside the bed for some lubricant, pouring it on his fingers and slathering himself up. When it's all warmed a bit, he gets to work with Will, kissing his spine as he slips a finger inside him, loosening him up before adding a second and third finger. No sounds come from Will, other than the occasional whooshing exhale when Hannibal attempts to make particularly tense sections more malleable, but Hannibal doesn't worry. Will has said before that, unlike Hannibal, he doesn't see the wonder in preparation, not finding himself awed by the flexibility of the human body and instead focusing on the end result, the aftermath of the body yielding.

Pulling his fingers out, Hannibal uses both hands to grab Will's hips, holding him steady. Will grips the pillow beneath his head in anticipation, spreading his legs wider and angling his hips more upward. With that, Hannibal slides inside him.

Bottoming, his hips pressed flush into Will's soft backside, Hannibal leans forward and peers down at the beautiful creature beneath him. Will stops hugging the pillow, falling lax against it as a blissful sigh slips from his pretty mouth, his eyes shut only lightly and his brow relaxed. Hannibal can't help but reach out and tousle his hair for a moment, his heart singing when Will opens his eyes and looks back at him with a lazy smile playing at the corner of his lips, his face seeming to appear so much younger than his real age, even despite the tired droop of his soft eyes.

"If you don't start moving, I think I might fall asleep before we're even finished," Will jokes when Hannibal continues to stare.

"I would've done my job, then," Hannibal smiles, but draws his hips back and pushes in again slowly, testing the waters.

Will chuckles. "Always looking at the bright side, aren't you?"

"It's the only side I see when I'm with you," Hannibal admits, stroking Will's back and caressing his spine.

Will hums and nods, probably too busy focusing on the sensation of Hannibal inside him to pay attention to his words.

"You're so very beautiful," Hannibal tells him as he finds a rhythm in his movements, drawing out long and slow, before plunging in as deep as he can, "I've never seen anything that quite compares to you, dear Will. Not even the streets of Florence match your beauty, nor all the paintings of the Uffizi Gallery."

He presses both of his hands to Will's back, running them along the soft flesh and marvelling at the muscles underneath, the names of which all whisper in his mind as he draws the tension from them, undoing each knot he finds. Will moans at the touch, pressing his arms against the mattress and writhing with pleasure when Hannibal thrusts into him.

Satisfied that he has ridden Will of every knot, he leans down and wraps his arms around Will's chest, almost laying on top of Will as he snaps his hips against him. Two of his fingers work their way up and press to the lowest part of Will's neck, the soft dip of skin above the collarbone where the tops of his fingers can feel each breath Will takes, digging in to touch that hollowed bit of flesh, no immediate muscle or bone beneath to protest against him. His other hand touches over Will’s heart, the beating, pulsing mess of it, so alive and tangible in his fingers, a sign of mortality that can only be seen as immortal when in the face of Will. Where other men yield to a ceasing heart, Will lives on forever.

Will whines each time Hannibal plunges into him, the noise indicating that he’s close to coming undone. Hannibal can feel his own orgasm pooling deep in his stomach, a dull ring of fire rising in his belly and licking at his spine, climbing up to meet his heart. He gives into the burn, lets it wash over him as he presses into Will, squeezing him tightly and holding him close, listening as Will whines his name in one breathless breath, collapsing into the mattress below and falling limp in Hannibal’s arm as he hits his climax. The sound of his name being said rings like a bell in Hannibal’s ears, clearing his head and giving him enough coherency to press his lips to Will’s ear and murmur his name as he takes one final plunge and fills Will as best he can.

For a few moments, Hannibal rests on top of Will, peppering kisses on the back of his head and neck. Will doesn’t move at all, silent and dead to the world.

Groaning, Hannibal lifts himself up, sighing at the loss of warmth from being pressed against Will and inside him. He grabs a corner of the towel and drags it up, wiping the excess semen that has dribbled out onto Will’s thighs, gentle and circular in his motions in an attempt to not disturb Will’s peace.

“Thanks, Hannibal,” Will mumbles, getting onto his hands and knees with a grunt.

At Will’s gesture, Hannibal hands him the towel, watching as Will wipes himself off, then crawls over to Hannibal, wiping him down too. Hannibal smiles at Will’s shaking hands, chuckling when Will throws the towel away, banishing it to the corner of the room. Fixing him with a toothy grin, Will grabs Hannibal’s chin and forces him to look away from the towel, kissing him and pressing their faces together. It’s slow, gentle, tasting like honey in Autumn. Hannibal finds himself mesmerised, his hands reaching to touch Will’s chest and arms, pulling him in close and tracing his muscles over.

“I’ll get the towel in the morning,” Will mumbles when he pulls away, chuckling when Hannibal raises an eyebrow, “oh shush, I always pick up after myself.”

He does, but Hannibal still prefers it when Will cleans as he goes, rather than waiting to do it at the last minute. “Like your underwear in the bathroom last week?”

Will groans and flops down onto the bed, rolling away from Hannibal. “I couldn’t *see* them, I didn’t have my glasses on and they were right in the corner!”

“Of course they were,” Hannibal says, laying down beside Will and pulling him in tight.

“Hannibal?” Will says after a few moments.

“Yes, Will?” Hannibal grabs bits of his hair and plays with them. His head is softer than fresh merino wool and smells of shampoo, though Hannibal can also pick out the underlying traces of blood.

“Do you wanna help me kill the next one?” Will asks.

Hannibal smiles, even if Will can’t see. “I would love to.”

Will nods, closes his eyes and moments later, he falls asleep. With such a powerful creature resting so sweetly and quietly in his arms, Hannibal cannot keep the thought from his mind:

And together, we are God.

End Notes

Can we please make 'Murder and Sex and Cannibalism' a legitimate tag in the fandom? Can everyone who writes this kind of stuff tag it like this please? It would make life so much easier for when I'm feeling a little funky and wanna read about these two being good Murder Husbands (I'm aware there's other tags, but come on - you have to admit that this one's catchy).

Anyway, hope you enjoyed. I might edit it and post a drawing of the murder scene, because my words may not have done it proper justice, but I just wanted to get this out in the world because it's been sitting in my Docs for ages (a week) and I'm sick of looking at it.

Please comment your thoughts! I love comments with all my heart and they make it easier for me to write.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!